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Arkansas Department of Agriculture Issues Important Reminder To Arkansans Acquiring Livestock From Out of State

Little Rock, AR -- The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is reminding Arkansans that they must ensure any livestock they purchase or receive from other states meets the State and Federal import requirements. The Department of Agriculture's Livestock and Poultry Division can offer assistance to ensure the animals have the proper documentation to allow movement into Arkansas.

"We appreciate the efforts of Arkansans to help alleviate challenges that animal agricultural producers have encountered due to temporary closures of processing facilities in other states," said Wes Ward, Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture. "Our staff is available to help answer questions about safety protocols and importation requirements that are in place to protect Arkansans and our state's agriculture industry," said Ward.

All animals brought into Arkansas must meet the importation requirements set by USDA and the State's Health Requirements Governing the Entry of Livestock, Poultry, and Exotic Animals. For swine, USDA interstate commerce regulations call for Premises Identification Number Ear Tags for Slaughter Swine, and the state requires that swine that are not from a qualified-validated herd be tested for Brucellosis and Pseudorabies. A Certificate of Veterinarian Inspection is also required to make sure the animal is not showing signs of illness. These rules are in place for public safety and to prevent the spread of disease within the state.

"Brucellosis and Pseudorabies are highly communicable diseases that can spread quickly from animal to animal, and in the case of Brucellosis, to humans," said State Veterinarian Dr. Randy Chick. "We are aware of individuals planning to purchase live animals, particularly swine, directly from out-of-state producers. These rules are in place to help the Department monitor and prevent diseases that can have devastating impacts on the Arkansas agriculture industry," said Livestock and Poultry Director Patrick Fisk.

More information about animal importation requirements may be obtained from the Arkansas Department of Agriculture website at

https://www.aad.arkansas.gov/Websites/aad/files/Content/5937242/Entry_Requriments_.pdf

If people are not planning to process the animals themselves, they should know that many meat processors in Arkansas are already booked for several months. Individuals planning to purchase an animal for processing should first check with local processing plants or prepare for other options such as arranging for holding the animal until it can be processed.

A list of Arkansas meat processors may be found on an interactive map at:

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/inspection/mpidirectory>

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit www.agriculture.arkansas.gov.